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RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 0296
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6579
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PE](#)

SUBJECT: VIEWS FROM THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL: ANDRADE GLUM ON
PANIAGUA'S CHANCES, WHILE MINOR PARTY CANDIDATES
CONCENTRATE ON CONGRESSIONAL RACES AND SEE HUMALA GAINING
STRENGTH

REF: A. LIMA 979

[1](#)B. LIMA 348

Classified By: Political Counselor Alexander Margulies. Reason: 1.4(d)
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SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) Centrist Front First Vice President candidate
Alberto Andrade continues to blame his alliance's
presidential candidate Valentin Paniagua for their campaign's
shortcomings and lack of success in the polls. Andrade seems
to be focusing on the congressional race, in which he
believes the Centrist Front will capture at least five seats.
Congressional candidates from President Alejandro Toledo's
Peru Possible party and the center-right Justicia Nacional
party are also focused on the legislative contest and see
ultra-nationalist "outsider" presidential candidate Ollanta
Humala gaining strength. END SUMMARY.

CENTRIST FRONT - ALBERTO ANDRADE

[1](#)2. (C) Former Lima Mayor Alberto Andrade, the Centrist
Front's (FC) candidate for First Vice President and head of
that alliance's congressional list for Lima, met in late
February with Poloff. Andrade had a gloomy assessment of FC
presidential candidate Valentin Paniagua's chances (five
percent of the "valid vote" in the latest Apoyo poll - Ref A)
and predicted that the alliance's congressional vote would
clear the four percent nationwide threshold and elect five
legislators: including Andrade himself, Accion Popular
President Victor Andres Garcia Belaunde, and current
congressmen Alcides Chamorro and Eduardo Carhuaricra.

[1](#)3. (C) Andrade repeated many of the complaints he made to
WHA P/DAS Charles Shapiro the month before (Ref B) about
Paniagua's faults as a candidate: he is "too serious,"
refuses to let his name be used as a slogan "Con Valentin
Habra Pan y Agua," and stubbornly refuses to speak Quechua.
Paniagua comes from Cuzco, Andrade explained, his father was
Bolivian and the family had a farm on which Paniagua learned
Quechua fluently. Unfortunately, he continued, Paniagua
hailed from a generation that was shamed out of using that
language. The few times that Paniagua has spoken in Quechua,

Andrade enthused, the effect was "magical," especially on indigenous women. If Paniagua would only use it, Andrade concluded, Quechua could be "the Exocet missile" for the campaign.

PERU POSIBLE: JUAN SHEPUT

14. (C) Juan Sheput, a presidential advisor and former Labor Minister (he resigned to run for Congress) is sixth on the list of 35 Peru Posible congressional candidates for Lima. During a 3/2 lunch with Polcouns, Sheput recounted that he had spent the previous two weeks campaigning in the poorest sections of Lima, as well as making a short swing to Arequipa and Puno on behalf of Peru Posible candidates there. His assessment of the presidential and congressional campaigns was:

-- The presidential race will come down to a run-off between Alan Garcia and Ollanta Humala. Humala controls the south, with at least 60 percent support throughout the southern coast and highlands; much higher than the polls report. Lourdes Flores' lead in those surveys is meaningless with respect to the final outcome. The polls are inherently unreliable, and provide nothing more than a general indication of the urban vote and do not/not reflect the third of the population that lives in rural areas. The general indication is that Flores is sinking and there does not seem to be much that she can do about it.

-- Flores' problem is that her Unidad Nacional alliance does not have the party organization or the congressional candidates necessary to connect with voters. APRA, on the

other hand, has a strong party organization and its politicians have come up through the party's ranks and know what it takes to campaign.

-- For example, over the past week, while Sheput was campaigning, he ran into APRA congressional candidate (and party co-Secretary General) Jorge del Castillo and Unidad Nacional congressional candidate (and former volleyball star) Gaby del Solar. Del Castillo was in a bar in Huara (a small town in northern Lima Department), in shorts and a Hawaiian shirt, quaffing beers and having his picture taken with the delighted locals. Del Solar, on the other hand, pulled up on the main street in Villa Maria del Triunfo (a squalid district on Lima's outskirts) in a new SUV, stepped out wearing a designer pantsuit and wrap-around shades, dumped off a disoriented student with a fold-out table, a few bottles of soda and some pamphlets to distribute to passers-by, and then roared off.

-- Humala only has to maintain his current base of support to make the second round runoff and he should have no/no trouble doing so. His appeal is not intellectual, but rather one of feeling, and all of the negative publicity and accusations regarding his possible involvement in human rights abuses has minimal effect on his followers. The infighting in his campaign has ended following the registration of his congressional list, and he has plenty of money and experienced political operatives (most of whom formerly worked with Fujimori), which should see him easily through the first round of voting.

-- In the congressional races, Peru Posible can win 8-10 seats. Half of those will be in Lima, with the rest likely in Piura (base of the party's Secretary General Javier Reategui), Lambayeque (where President Toledo is popular thanks to his support for the Olmos irrigation project), Arequipa (base of Congressman Gilberto Diaz Peralta), Ica (base of Congressman Juan Ramirez), and Madre de Dios (base of Congressman Eduardo Salhuana).

15. (C) Caceres, a retired army officer running for Congress on the center-right Justicia Nacional ticket (Jaime Salinas is the party's leader and presidential candidate), met with Poloff on 3/14. Caceres' focus was solely on getting elected to Congress; his party's presidential candidate, Jaime Salinas, obtains at most one percent support in the polls. He said that his campaign is targeting the 32,000 military that he believes will be able to vote in Lima on election day as well as military families and retirees. He commented that while Humala should overwhelmingly win the votes for president of low-level officers and the rank-and-file, the absence of retired military officers from Humala's congressional list in Lima opens the door for pro-military congressional candidates from other parties. Caceres said that he is campaigning door-to-door in military housing areas, pushing proposals for a Armed Forces Ombudsman, increased pensions, and other benefits.

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